Development of Infrastructural Facilities

3027. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has at any stage examined that India does not figure high on the global travellers' itinerary;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the volume of business done by this segment pales into insignificance when compared to the business done in some of the tiny countries that dot the world map;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the tourism segment in India is bedevilled by infrastructural inadequacies such as shortage of accommodation, poor transport and communication facilities;

(f) if so, whether the Government propose to overcome these infrastructural inadequacies; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) to (d). The shares of India in the world tourist arrivals and receipts in the year 1995 were 0.37% and 0.74% respectively.

(e) to (g). Inadequate infrastructure facilities is the major constraint in the growth of tourism in the country. The efforts of the Government are to improve the infrastructure facilities in coordination with the State Governments and by encouraging the private sector to invest in tourism infrastructure. The Government has prepared a National Tourism Strategy paper which envisages a synergized approach to tourism development, involving other Ministries, State Governments, financial institutions and the private sector.

Introduction of Shuttle Service between Dum-Dum and Barasat

3028. SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the demand for introducing shuttle service between Dum-Dum and Barasat;

(b) if so, whether any steps are being taken in this regard;

(c) whether it is possible to extend 4.55 P.M.s Birati local train upto Barasat; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Dum-Dum and Barasat are already connected with 55 pairs of train services. Introduction of an originating' train from Dum-Dum/Barasat has been examined but not found feasible at present as Dum-Dum does not have terminal facilities.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

New Post Offices in Kerala

3029. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the number of new Post Kerala during 1996-97, so far?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : During 1996-97, 3 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices and 2 Departmental Sub Offices have been sanctioned and 4 Extra Departmental Branch Offices have been upgraded into Departmental Sub Offices.

Speed Post Facility to W. Bengal

3030. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to provide Speed Post Service Facility in major cities of West Bengal;

(b) is so, the district-wise details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The Speed Post Facility is at present provided in the following cities/towns of West Bengal :

National Speed Post Service

Calcutta
Howrah
Siliguri

Point to Point Speed Post Service

Berhampur.
Haldia
Shantiniketan
Raniganj

At present Govt. has no proposal to extend Speed Post Service to any other major cities of West Bengal. A particular city is brought under speed Post National Network only when there is sufficient traffic to make it financially viable and operationally feasible.

(b) and (c). Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Appointment on Compassionate Ground

3031. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of representations received by the

Western Railway authorities from the members of the families of deceased employees for employment since from January, 1993, till date;

(b) the number of representations out of these recommended by the Members of Parliament;

(c) the steps taken by the Government thereon; and

(d) the time limit by which the appointment are likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(c) and (d). The extant instructions require the Zonal Railways to make all out efforts to provide compassionate appointments to all eligible persons as early as possible within the guidelines lais down for the purpose.

It is, however, difficult to fix any time limit for the appointment on compassionate grounds, as the same depends on several factors like availability of suitable vacancies, wards attaining majority, etc.

Raising of Funds

3032. SHRI B.L. SHARMA, 'PREM' : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that a plan was prepared for raising funds about Rs. 30,000 crores by making commercial use of very large unutilised properties of the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be implemented;

(c) whether the proposals include any such properties in vicinity of the Capital; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). No, Sir. However, with a view to generate additional resources for development, Railways had proposed to commercially utilise air-space over Railway land/ buildings. A decision on this proposal has been deferred by Government of India.

Passenger Amenities at Railway Stations in Tamil Nadu

3033. SHRI A.G.S. RAM BABU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the facilities for passengers are provided properly at the railway stations in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if not, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) the quantum of funds sanctioned during 1996-97 for providing passenger facilities at railway stations in Tamil Nadu; and

(d) the details of the facilities likely to be provided by Railway Administration in Tamil Nadu in near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d). Facilities at stations are provided as per norms based on the volume of passenger traffic handled. Stations in the State of Tamil Nadu are provided with amenities commensurate with the volume of traffic. These facilities are augmented/additional facilities provided wherever so warranted by growth in traffic. Allocation of funds for provision of passenger amenities at stations are provided to the zonal Railways according to their requirements and no state-wise bifurcation of funds are maintained. However, an allocation of Rs. 15.74 crore has been made for passenger Amenity works at stations on Southern Railway. Future programme for provision of amenities are decided based on the over all availability of funds during each financial year.

[Translation]

Introduction of New EMU Train

3034. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether no E.M.U. train ply between Gaya to Mughal Sarai;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to introduce new E.M.U. train service between Gaya to Mughal Sarai and Gaya to Dhanbad; and

(c) if so, the time by which it is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). MEMU services are proposed to be provided on the Mughal Sarai-Gaya-Dhanbad section in a phased manner on availability of MEMU rakes.

[English]

Offices of Divisional Engineers

3035. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of offices of Divisional Engineers (Telecom) of the Telecom Department in the country, State-wise, location-wise;

(b) the criteria for setting up such offices;

(c) the number of new offices likely to be set up in the country, State-wise, locations-wise;

(d) whether the Government also propose to set up this office in Daltanganj in Bihar; and

(e) if not, the reasons thereof?